

STREET-CAR OBSERVATIONS

Gangs of Smokers Who Infest and Congest the Platforms of the Cars.

Nuisance That Has Become Intolerable—Refusals to Stop—Certainty of Suits Gives Rise to a Faint Remark.

The smoking nuisance has increased to such an extent that it now overshadows all others connected with street-car travel. In some way it has come to be taken for granted that the street-car platform belongs to the smoker and this view has apparently been encouraged by the railway management.

The lady who enters or leaves a car has to make her way through a crowd of men, who puff muzzled tobacco smoke and vile breath into her face as she elbows her way out or in. She is fortunate if she gets through without having her dress so disordered that she presents that appearance so much dreaded by all ladies—"a perfect fright."

The smokers are usually fat men who desire their smoke after meals and are bent upon having it no matter how disagreeable this pursuit of pleasure may be made to

others. On the electric cars this enjoyment gives additional danger to street-car travel, as it makes the footing of the arriving or departing traveler more precarious than if the platform and steps were kept clear. It is by no means an unusual sight to see the platform crowded with men while the interior of the car is empty. These patrons seem to think that the cars are run specially for their convenience and comfort. They stick to the platform like barnacles to a weather-beaten brig and can hardly be pried off with a crow-bar. A reform might be effected by employing a dozen or so men to make it a business to mount these cars when the smokers are most numerous and jump on their feet with hob-nailed shoes. Perhaps a better way would be for decent patrons to put themselves to some inconvenience for a few days and refuse to ride upon lines infested by these platform nuisances. The attention of the street-car management has been repeatedly called to this matter in the past. Never but once was an attempt made to do away with it. That was when Tom Johnson had a compartment set off in the rear of a num-



ber of cars into which the smokers could retire. That, however, was only an additional concession to the smoker; nothing has ever been done in the interest of the much larger class of street-car patrons, who either do not smoke, or else enjoy their tobacco elsewhere and not to the discomfort of their fellow-creatures.

Manager Frenzel can make many friends for his administration if he will take this nuisance in hand and promptly bring about its abatement.

Human nature is so permeated with activity that whenever two or three persons are gathered together, even in a street car, there are bound to be what Mulvaney would call "proceedings." The other night as an Illinois-street electric car was flying out toward the suburbs, two gentlemen who had been conversing all the way out performed a little performance which very much amused the other passengers.

The black-eyed man with the gray beard tapped the other man, who was a traveling man with a curly mustache, upon the left breast and said:

"You're at home."

The traveling man evidently interpreted the remark to mean that he was not out on the road, so he looked pleasantly affirmative and said, "Yes."

The car was still flying along, and the black-eyed man tapped the traveling man again and said:

"You're at home."

The traveling man looked a little dazed, but being convinced that he was not out on the road, he again responded, "yes," and the car still went flying along. Now the black-eyed man seemed to feel that he must put some decisive action into the matter, so he tapped the traveling man again with some emphasis, and remarked with vigor:

"You're at home, I mean; that's your street that we just passed."

"Oh!" shouted the traveling man, and made a dash for the end of the car. Then everybody laughed madly, except the black-eyed man, who had either no sense of humor or was too worn out with his efforts.

The other night Captain Quigley boarded an Illinois-street car, on his way down to roll-call, and was chatting away very pleasantly as he buttoned his great coat up to his chin, and flashed his brass buttons in the bright electric light. Presently the conductor appeared at the rear of the car where the Captain was standing, and stood up before him, his cap in his hand, and with the same long look of earnestness and expectancy with which every passenger is confronted.

"What do you want?" asked Mr. Quigley, replied the conductor.

"What the d— is the matter with you?" returned the indignant dignitary.

"There isn't a thing on earth the matter with me, but I want your fare, or I want to see your badge."

"You're getting just a little too cute, all you fellows—a little too smart. I'll put my badge on this time, but I'll be a dollar I don't do it to-morrow night. You fellows think you own the town; you may own the banks, and you may own the franchises in the universe, but you—"

two cars in quick succession went by him, the motorman and conductor refusing to stop. In consequence he had to make a train at the Union Station, to the detriment of important business that he had out of town. It is not unlikely that a suit will be brought against the company if loss results from the failure of this business man to meet an important engagement.

Gravitation is hardly more certain in its course than the Citizens' Street Railway Company of a suit for damages whenever anyone is hurt by the street-cars. A lady, apparently of middle life and middle station, was in the transfer-car a few evenings since, and was a little slow in making her way to the door to take a car. The man who handles the lever by which the door is closed had his attention concentrated in other directions, and did not notice in time to prevent the door pinching the woman's hand more or less severely.

"Oh," she exclaimed, in a tone that caught the attention of the entire car. And then she began to rub her hand, and showed the most intense pain on her face. Something suggested affection, and a bystander, of course a rude man, asked, in the same loud tone:

"How come are you going to sue the company for?"

The question raised a laugh at her expense, but it cured the pain. The woman flashed a look of contempt and indignation upon the questioner, and bounced out of the car in a hurry.

OFFERINGS OF THE POETS.

Let Undone,
It isn't the thing you do, dear,
It's the thing you do to me,
Which gives you a bit of heartache
At the setting of the sun,
The tender word forgotten,
The letter you did not write,
The flower you might have sent, dear,
Are your haunting ghosts to-night.

The stone you might have lifted
Out of a brother's way,
The heart you might have counselled
You were hurried too much to say,
The loving touch of the hand, dear,
The gentle and winsome tone,
That you had no time or thought for,
With troubles enough of your own.

The little act of kindness,
So easily out of mind,
Those chances to be angels,
Which every mortal finds—
They come in night and silence—
Each chill, reproachful writh—
When hope is faint and lagging,
And a slight has dropped on faith.

For life is all too short, dear,
And sorrow is all too great,
To suffer our slow compassion,
That lingers until too late,
And it's not the thing you do, dear,
It's the thing you leave undone,
Which gives you the bit of heartache
At the setting of the sun.

—Margaret K. Sangster.

Fairy Tales.
The time I like for fairy tales
Is when the day begins to die,
Just as the brilliant sunset pales,
And twilight shadows gather nigh,
When I can lie before the fire
That blazes with a ruddy light,
And hear the tales that never tire,
Of imp and fairy, gnome and sprite.

And sometimes as the shadows fall
Across the floor from every side,
A subtle dance on the wall,
And guises within the corners hide.
Then as the fire-light blazes high
We see the shadows run away,
And gently against the wall
Like spirits of the wood at play.

and when the embers faintly glow,
Upon the smoke I see ascend
The little folk I love to know,
Who vanish at the story's end.

—Fanny Scott Miles, in Harper's Young People.

Hope and I.
In a cottage, all alone,
Hope and I long dwell together;
Never sick, nor ever a moon,
Was from us heard; all kinds of weather
It mattered not, we still were one.

Hope and I on frugal fare
Dwelt together merrily;
Knocked at our portals; cheerily
Lived we on from day to day,
I was young and Hope was gay.

But we quarreled yesterday,
How could I ever trust—believe her?
Hope is but a faithless lay,
Her countenance, her smile deceives;
Tho' my heart bled in its pain,
I will ne'er meet Hope again.

—R. J. McHugh, in Boston Pilot.

Sub Rosa.
Under the roses the joys and woes
Of life are told; but better and brawn
Their tiny trifles light as air
Mutterer with fond delight to share
Their love of friends, dispraise of foes.

Here gossip endless ebbs and flows,
Here burdened minds seek sweet repose,
Succor from sorrow, free from care,
Under the rose.

Under the rose, the sad, pale rose,
Love lies dreaming what no one knows;
Love lies dreaming so softly there
While 'neath his loom, white and bare,
Threatens the thorn that ever grows
Under the rose.

—Lafe.

Cradle Song.
Ere the moon begins to rise
Or a star to shine,
All the bluebells close their eyes—
So close their eyes—
Thine, dear, thine!

Birds are sleeping in the nest
On the swaying bough;
Thus, against the mother-breast—
So sleeping, sleep,
Sleep, sleep, sleep!

—Thomas Bailey Aldrich, in the Independent.

A SOCIETY LEADER GONE.

Dr. Ruth of the Navy Was the Ward McAllister of the Capital.

Washington Letter in Philadelphia Record.
Washington has never had a Ward McAllister. I have heard it said and seen it published by those whose acquaintance with Washington society was merely external that Dr. Melancthon Luther Ruth, of the navy, was the Ward McAllister of Washington society, but this was only an awkward way of stating the unique position which Dr. Ruth held in Washington society. Handsome in figure and in face, gifted with fine and most agreeable manners, and above all with that social ability made up of tact and courage, which is rarer than executive ability, Dr. Ruth, during the years he was stationed here on various kind of duty, was the premier of Washington society. He was the leader, not in the offensive sense in which Ward McAllister leads, but because he was a natural leader. He was the favorite bachelor of Washington. Without him no society affair was a success. With him it was much more of a success than it would otherwise have been. And if he used his power towards the last in personal a way; if he was arbitrary in encouraging this debutante in preference to that, and in helping this outsider into "the swim" in preference to that, he was still popular to the last; and now that he has actually gone, even those who didn't like him miss him and wish him back. Such a character is difficult to replace, even in Washington where among the military set to which Dr. Ruth belonged there are many aspirants for similar leadership. As a matter of fact, no one will ever fill the place that Dr. Ruth held. But it is as possible from Ward McAllister's side as it is from Dr. Ruth's. McAllister is not a leader. He is a manager, a tactician, a head steward or butler. Now this is just what is needed here, according to the people who devote most of their time to society. The great increase in the society population of Washington within the past few years makes it necessary, they say, to draw the lines more sharply, to organize, to make society more compact, to have some permanent head to it who shall plan for a season at a time, instead of for a party or a series of parties, and who shall look out for the multiplicity of details in arrangement for a winter's programme. In short, Washington society is sighing for a McAllister, not an adviser as Dr. Ruth was, but a director.

The Important Point.

"It was the wish of the testator," said the lawyer to the court, "to provide for his widow."

"That has nothing to do with the case," said the court testily. "What we want to know is whether the testator dotted his 'i's and crossed his 't's."

MARCY leads the jewelry trade this year.

GREAT sale of Holiday Jewelry at Marcy's.

SELECTING THEIR GIFTS

The Quiet Neighborhood All Agog with a Gentle Christmas Conspiracy.

What Mrs. Brown, Jones, Smith and Robinson Are Preparing for the Delight of Their Unsuspecting Husbands.

The quiet neighborhood is preparing for Christmas. Of course at this blessed time the neighbors are more neighborly than ever, and there never was such a season of hurried visits and consultations as has been going on among Mrs. Smith, Mrs. Brown, Mrs. Jones and Mrs. Robinson.

The awful confidences these ladies have exchanged in regard to the presents they have in store for their respective lords in the way of gifts would probably bring about an insurrection if prematurely divulged. It will be bad enough when the first crop of bills comes in with the new year, and the victims feel the full force of the calamity that has fallen upon them.

"I shall give Mr. Smith a set of parlor furniture," said Mrs. Smith. "It will be a great surprise to him; no doubt, but last August he remarked that the present parlor set was getting worn. It was given us by pa when we went to housekeeping, and when the new set comes I will give the other to ma."

"My parlor set is good enough until next Christmas," remarked Mrs. Brown, "and so I have bought the loveliest lace curtains you ever saw, and that will be my present to Mr. Brown."

Mrs. Jones and Mrs. Robinson then communicated the secret as to what they had selected to give their husbands. When they cases the presents were articles of use as well as ornament, the ladies declaring that they never allowed husbands to turn their backs, and that when they bought anything for their husbands it would not be any waste of money—that could never be laid to their charge what ever might come.

Messrs. Smith, Brown, Jones and Robinson were not wholly oblivious of the gentle conspiracy that was going on against them. They distinctly remembered the Christmas of 1889, when the ladies had been diverted from opening this or that closed door, from going into the parlor or headed off from the library, it has been without protest on their part, and in a spirit of meekness that only the near approach of the genial season could warrant.

The days are going on, and the day that comes but once a year is getting nearer and nearer. The ladies are chattering than ever, and, as the close of each day's shopping, they get together and make further plans for the campaign.

In the meantime it is noted that the penitence secretiveness of Jones, the dogged taciturnity of Smith, the poetic sadness of Brown, and the subdued silence of Robinson have given way to a desperate sort of cheerfulness. It borders on that air of bravado with which the real tough man mounts the scaffold and admits the rope around his own neck. They probably feel that they are to be hanged on the Christmas tree in a glorious way, and that there is no escaping fate, and they might as well go with their boots on.

This cowardly complacency, however, is attended by a singular cycle of phenomena. As the husbands of the four ladies enter their households it is noticed by the children and the good wives that the light in the eyes of the husband, with the tropical fragrance of unusual volume and ardor, sometimes it appears to be oranges, at other times lemons and at still other times cardamon seeds or cloves.

"Henry has been unusually hard at work for the past two weeks," Mrs. Smith explained to mother, "and it's not to be wondered at that he gets in the morning with a headache." Whereupon mother tossed her head in the air in utter disbelief of the explanation. She has had many years' experience in this vale of tears, and as to husbands, she has had one of her own long enough to know the tricks and manners of the entire sex.

But no wife quarrels with her husband before Christmas, nor afterward until the major portion of the bills have been paid, and so Smith, Brown, Jones and Robinson, taking advantage of the time, have endeavored their husbands. They have worked down-town every evening and attribute their unusual application to business to the holidays. At any other time a mere off-hand explanation of this character would not have "gone" at all with either one of the four ladies, but now it is really too bad. They are apparently as guileless as infants in arms. Even an inquiry made of Mrs. Brown by Brown, junior, as to what pa, when he had heard talking with Mr. Jones, meant by "a jack pot" was suffered to go by without reference. Thus, while the wives have confederated together to aid and assist each other in every way toward having a happy Christmas, a delightful looking of the family, Smith, Brown, Jones and Robinson, soon to suffer a common woe, drawn together by the sacred cords of human sympathy, are going to have as good a time as possible, knowing full well that on Christmas day, when the trap is sprung, they will all be in it.

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